



# Berger Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 100218  
**Local Authority** Hackney  
**Inspection number** 285744  
**Inspection dates** 18–19 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Adrian Lyons HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Anderson Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Hackney
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		London E9 6HB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8985 6280
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	420	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8985 7434
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John l'Anson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Coulthard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Berger is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils come from the inner urban residential area around the school. This area has substantial economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is very high. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and around two thirds come from families where English is an additional language. Around a quarter of pupils are refugee children. Over a third of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that Berger Primary is a good and continually improving school, but would add that it has some outstanding features. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The school's leaders and managers put improving the provision for pupils at the heart of their decision making. They have a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have shown their strong capacity to bring about improvement through the raising of standards. Each of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection has been resolved. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well so that, although the standards of pupils beginning the school are very low, by Year 6 their standards are now around those found nationally. Links with other organisations are used effectively to support pupils' learning and development.

An exceptional area of the school's work is in preparing pupils for their future economic and social well - being. The school has an excellent programme to enrich the experience of pupils including the superb teaching of French and Mandarin Chinese. Pupils' aspirations are raised through, for example, visits to a range of universities including Oxford and Cambridge. At the University of Hertfordshire pupils participated in scientific projects. Year 6 pupils engage in a 'mini enterprise' competition learning about a range of business and economics concepts including making money. The raising of social aspirations is complemented by wonderful cultural opportunities with trips to venues such as the National Gallery, and also by visits to the school from professional musicians, writers and athletes.

Most pupils achieve well, and the school has worked hard to address the learning challenges presented by pupils with learning disabilities or non-native speakers of English. However, teachers' planning does not always take full account of the needs of the more able. Improving the proportion of pupils gaining the highest levels in test results is now a priority for the school.

One reason for pupils' good achievement is that they are well cared for and are ably supported in a caring environment. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and feel they are able to achieve well. The school uses its resources well and provides good value for money.

The majority of parents and pupils are very happy with the school and all it offers, but some could do more to help the school to improve the unsatisfactory attendance of some students. Pupil absence is a significant barrier to the further raising of achievement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers in all lessons address the needs of more able learners.
- Improve attendance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's focus on raising standards is paying off. Test results at the end of Year 6 have been rising and standards are now broadly average. This represents good progress from the very low standards recorded when children start school. Although standards are well below average at the end of Year 2, they have held up well against a backdrop of falling standards on entry and increasing numbers entering or leaving during the school year. More pupils are attaining the average national standards but not enough reach the higher levels in English and mathematics, particularly in Year 2 but also Year 6. This is because a few of the more able pupils are not challenged or supported quite as effectively as other groups.

Overall achievement is good. This is brought about by good teaching, an outstanding curriculum and teachers having a clear understanding of the potential of individual pupils. This is particularly so for lower and middle attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties or at an early stage of learning English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being is good, with outstanding features. Pupils' contributions in lessons show that they enjoy school and are eager to share their experiences with confidence. Pupils report that 'school is fun, safe, you get good education and go out on special outings'. Exciting projects such as the mini enterprise and visits to universities help pupils to acquire much needed life-skills and experience of the wider world. Pupils are active and make an outstanding contribution to the community by raising funds for charities and contributing to environmental projects. Their good understanding of healthy lifestyles is reflected in their choice of healthy lunches and pupils explaining that they choose 'smoothies' because 'they give vitamins'.

An effective partnership between home and school is reflected in pupils' good behaviour, resilience and enthusiasm. Their spiritual development is satisfactory while moral development is good. Pupils' exposure to enriched learning experiences results in outstanding social and cultural development. Despite the school being proactive and having a wide range of strategies, attendance is unsatisfactory. This is partially due to families taking extended leave during term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching and learning are key factors in pupils' good progress and personal development. Relationships between teaching staff and pupils are strong and help to keep pupils well motivated and focused on their work. Teaching is enlivened by the

use of interactive whiteboards. Pupils say, 'Our learning is fun, our teachers talk through our targets and help us when we need it'. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is well organised and activities challenge and interest the children.

Teachers' effective questioning engages and challenges all groups of pupils. Occasionally the time spent doing this means that there is not enough time for the pupils to complete other activities thoroughly. Pupils with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English benefit from well tailored support. This helps them play a full part in lessons and make strong gains in learning. However, the challenge and support given to some more able pupils is not as well honed and they sometimes mark time.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

An outstanding curriculum helps pupils achieve well and enjoy school to the full. The curriculum is rich and varied and includes good activities to help the pupils to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle. Distinctively, French and Mandarin Chinese are provided for the older pupils adding extra vitality and an international dimension to the curriculum. The range, quality and uptake of visits, visitors and other activities are first class, helping pupils open their eyes way beyond their normal experiences. As two girls said after watching *Madam Butterfly*, 'We like it so much we wished we were in it'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good with outstanding features. Pupils enjoy school very much as it provides a safe, secure and inspiring learning environment, in an atmosphere of racial harmony. The school has well established systems for gathering the views of the pupils and their parents, and responds to them well. Parents are kept well informed about their children's education and the vast majority of parents hold the school in very high regard.

It has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and progress. Policies and procedures for pupils' safety are effective. All staff have criminal record checks and are trained well in child protection. Site security is good and pupils feel safe. Pupils appreciate the care provided by adults and speak highly of all staff and appreciate their quick response to any issues raised. The school has good systems and procedures for identifying individual needs and caters well for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Its provision for pupils with English as an additional language is extremely effective. All staff contribute to regular reviews, and the systems used for setting targets and tracking pupils' progress are good. However, procedures for monitoring the higher attaining pupils are not as rigorous. Links with outside agencies are very good and have a positive impact on pupils' education and learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and have brought about sustained improvement since the last inspection. Amongst teaching and non teaching staff there is a strong sense of common purpose for all pupils to succeed well. Governors, drawn largely from the local community, fulfil their duties well. Self-evaluation is well focused and effective. The performance management of staff is used effectively to drive up standards and is clearly linked to good professional development. As a result, staffing is stable and well motivated. Parents and pupils are properly consulted about the school's work.

Leaders and managers at all levels work closely together, providing a good model of teamwork. The headteacher and senior leadership are highly respected and combine constancy with innovation. The school demonstrates good capacity to continue its improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to thank you for the welcome you gave me and the team of inspectors when we visited your school on the 18- 19 October 2006. We really appreciated the help you gave us and especially in sharing your work and your ideas about the school.

You attend a good school that is getting better all the time. Some aspects of your school are outstanding. You told us that one of the best things about your school is that it is 'fun'. You clearly enjoy coming to school. Your school gives you many excellent opportunities and experiences. You have exciting trips out of school. You have interesting visitors coming into school such as writers, musicians and athletes. It is really good that you are encouraged to think about world issues whether raising money for water aid or being involved in recycling locally. There is an excellent range of after school activities.

Some of you told us that the school is perfect, but we found a couple of areas where the school could improve. Some of you told us that sometimes the work is too easy. Most of you make really good progress in your work because of good teaching. However, we have asked your teachers to give those of you who find work the easiest, harder things to do. This is because, although most of you do well in the national tests, we think that more of you could gain the highest marks.

We have also asked the school to work even harder to improve attendance. Of course you are the key to this. However good your teachers are, if you are not at school you are not learning and making the progress of which you are capable.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons

Her Majesty's Inspector